

# Formatting Problem: Circular Reasoning

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*Source:*

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Excel/microsoft.public.excel.worksheet.functions/2008-04/msg01174.html>

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Hi... new to the forum. It looks like there's lots of good stuff on here.

Here's my question:

I'm working on a sudoku-solver and having some trouble using conditional formatting as part of a formula. I'm familiar with using a

+style(if(current()=0,"Green","Red))

type of formula, but I'm having trouble working with cells whose format depend on each other. For example, I have two cells that can both be either "." or "\*" — and I want to make the "\*" cells style RED — only if both cells are not "\*". In other words, I want the style RED to be mutually exclusive, so that if both of the cells are "\*" then the style will be GREEN while if only one of the cells is a "\*" the style will be RED. (GREEN is the style for all "." values regardless)

My problem is that when I initiate the formula as...

=...+style(if(current()=E24,"Green","Red))

(where E24 is the 'other' cell)

...then it turns into a circular reasoning problem. If I install the formula in both cells then it "works" first in whichever cell loads first. It ends up making that cell RED when both cells have a value of "\*". If I reload the formula from the other cell the formatting switches but never gets it right.

Does anyone have familiarity working with problems of circular reasoning in excel or in programming? Or any ideas about how to have current cell values influence formatting between each other?—

Any ideas or links to other resources would be great! Thanks!

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\*note: I use open office calc; it's basically the same as excel as far as I know (but free)

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